

## Meeting Minutes

January 20, 2012 9:00 am – 11:00 am

IDHS Offices: 401 S. Clinton, 7th Floor, Chicago – Executive Video Conference Room  
100 S. Grand Ave, Harris Building, 3rd Floor, Springfield – Executive Video Conference Room

- I. Welcome and Administrative Items – Cristal Thomas, Co-Chair
  - a. Attendance:
    - i. Chicago: Grace Hong (IDHS), Kathy Ryg, Amy Rynell, Cristal, Kate, Dan Lesser, Dawn Melchiorre, Tracy, John Cheney Egan, Mark Ishaug, Nicole Robinson, Allison, Doug, Peter Vina, Terry Solomon, Joe Antolin, Julia Piorier
    - ii. Springfield: Laurie Kessleman (Simon's office), Gary Tomlin
    - iii. Phone: Bert Wbber, Mary Ellen, Mark Haller, AHlam Jbara, Esperanza, Anita, Barb Karacic, Juanita Irizarry
  - b. Approve Minutes from Last Meeting
    - i. Change Esperanza's org name and Peter Vina's org name
    - ii. John Cheney moved, Kathy Ryg seconded, approved
- II. Reflections and Feedback on Listening Tour - Cristal Thomas, Co-Chair
  - a. Final thoughts
  - b. Chicago: Congresswoman Schakowsky was taking the SNAP Challenge and the importance of keeping this program strong. Heard from two clients and that the benefits are helpful but not always enough to sustain their families. Need to ensure that dietary and religious needs are fulfilled through SNAP.
  - c. Marion: Issues with transportation, Alan Summers perspective was enlightening as it helped to better understand the service gaps. Good to understand that there are gaps because of DHS being understaffed or overwhelmed by the caseload.
  - d. Rockford: There are gaps that can be filled but there is a larger economic issue that needs to be addressed. Needs unique solutions in order to bring about real changes.
  - e. Recommended a summary of the listening tour events.
- III. Working Group Reports of Recommendations - Cristal Thomas, Co-Chair
  - a. Underserved Populations, Marla Goodwin, Chair (Tracy Smith is standing in for Marla)
    - i. This group covered many populations that often faced different sets of issues.
    - ii. Able to look broadly at these issues:
      1. Transportation:
      2. Communications: not having access to technology, language barriers,
      3. Eligibility issues
    - iii. These groups have a strong need for collaboration. Public/Private, stronger philanthropic response, Government partnerships
    - iv. Need to ensure that the language barriers are not just focused on Spanish language barriers, as many new immigrants are also representing other cultures and languages
  - b. Vulnerable Adults, Dan Lesser, Chair

- i. Able to bring in reps from groups that incorporated the whole group.
  - ii. Many of the recommendations came from working group sessions and listening tour. These cover the breadth of issues that came forward and are a good base for the action plan.
  - iii. Issues to consider moving forward:
    - 1. Need to ensure that we talk about ending hunger for everyone in Illinois, not just for certain populations
    - 2. Throughout the report need to keep a tone that improved nutrition remains strong
  - iv. Mark was impressed by bringing in nontraditional groups that were not necessarily focused on food. This will help when we move towards implementation of the plan. We now have partners for delivery of services.
- c. Children and Family at Risk, Kathy Ryg, Chair
  - i. Work groups have been a good opportunity to bring stakeholders to the table and involve them in this process. A lot of interest in addressing this issue in an integrated way.
  - ii. Had the opportunity to visit Holy Family Food pantry and the issue of families not being served a meal. Breakfast program visit was good to see how a program can be run effectively. "Grab & Go" program that was easily integrated into the school day. The principal can be a great spokesperson for this program.
  - iii. Because of the people in the room it helped to identify areas that were barriers. One of these was the certification process of afterschool feeding programs. Also happened with discussing issues with childcare feeding programs issues.
  - iv. Also identified programs that can be scaled up that will help to better address the needs.
  - v. Identified programs that are working that can be replicated in other communities.
  - vi. Joe, report of Headstart program meeting. Need to look at better way to register in-kind donations which could assist with feeding more people. Dan Lesser with help connect Dawn with Vanessa Rich who can provide additional information.
  - vii. John was glad to have the issue brought up about the exemption form at the listening tour event. They are working on redoing this.
  - viii. State database is going to incorporate Feeding Illinois programs.
- d. Need to make sure that there is not overlap on recommendations. Submit final recommendations to Dawn, copying Kate and Cristal as soon as possible. Now in the process to recommendations.
- e. Caseworker for a Day experience
  - i. Good to see the community aspect of the office
  - ii. Concern about 48 hour turnaround for online applications
  - iii. Issues with LINK card being demagnetized and vendors not keying the account numbers. Dan brought up that a new contractor for cards.
  - iv. Recommendations were submitted to FI for further reviews

- v. Need to have better messaging about food stamps not being “welfare.” Kathy recommended taking a look at the FRAC poll on the public perception of SNAP. Has tremendous public support.
- vi. Saw such a large rise of college degree applicants at DHS offices. Need to make sure this group is being served well. Income is above the poverty levels so they cannot be served through state/federal programs. Last year the asset test was dropped on the SNAP application. There is a backlash on this issue (MI lottery case). Need to be aware of any legislation that might add this back into the application.
- vii. Grace brought up that a USDA is having a stronger focus on fraud from vendors. Keying in the cards is a trigger for fraud alerts.
- viii. The framing of the issues should include this new group facing hunger
- ix. May need to add an action area on “Protect & Defend” strategy particularly in the coming election year. Concern that attacks on SNAP could change it into what happened to welfare in the 90’s.
  - 1. Need to make sure we are ready to face the issues being raised from the 2013 budget. Dan recommends the commission issue a statement that we are opposed to any change from state government that would increase hunger in Illinois.
  - 2. Kathy recommended that this messaging is outside of the Commission and incorporate other groups who would be supportive of this messaging.
- x. Need to proofread numbering system on recommendations.
- xi. Heavily focused on existing food systems. Wonder whether new systems should be involved. Will be addressed later.
- xii. Need to address special diets. Should this be raised as a recommendation? May already be summed up in the vulnerable adults section.
- xiii. Need to identify, modify and duplicate programs. Amy suggested a brief on existing programs.

#### IV. Hunger Free Illinois - Kate Maehr, Co-Chair

- a. There has been an urgency for this report to active and pushes this work forward. Need to use this as an opportunity to raise awareness and recognition of the challenges people are facing. Need to bring new resources to the table, including funding and more participants.
- b. Has looked to other states that have been doing similar work. MN has a good effort in place that brings together stakeholders that are working toward a set of strategies.
- c. The purpose of this is to create a collective effort (not another org). Need to create work plans from the working groups. This effort will help to push these plans forward.
- d. Brought on Share Our Strength as a partner that is making a 5 year commitment to fund efforts around childhood hunger. This has come with a person to staff this effort.
- e. Breakfast Challenge and Summit
  - i. This idea was brought in from other state campaigns.
  - ii. Proclamation by Governor’s Office to implement breakfast programs in all schools.
  - iii. Monetary prizes with participating in this program.
  - iv. Also has grant money available through Share Our Strength to help make this possible.

- v. Summit will have best practices and idea sharing from across the state. ISBE is helping to pull people together.
    - vi. Launch is March 1 or 2
    - vii. Summit will possibly be March 20
  - f. Summer Feeding Program
    - i. Participation in the federal program is very low nationally and IL. Focus will be to increase participation.
    - ii. Focus this summer will be in Cook County and Northern Illinois.
    - iii. Launch information will hopefully come together soon.
- V. Launch - Kate Maehr, Co-Chair
- a. Logistics/Agenda
    - i. Formal launch of recommendations as the work plans are coming together
    - ii. Launch date will be Feb. 15 at 10 a.m., Billy Shore from Share Our Strength will be present. Governor will be at the event along with other VIPs. Will be held in an elementary school that does breakfast in the classroom. Location will be determined soon.
    - iii. Would like to have as many Commissioners present as possible.
    - iv. Launch is of report and Hunger Free Illinois
    - v. Launch invitation will be sent out next week
    - vi. PR firm being brought on to handle the media
  - b. No Kid Hungry Campaign
    - i. Second to last state being brought into this program. 18 in total. Similar work being focused on breakfast, summer, after school programs.
    - ii. Team has a large amount of resources and best practices to help implement an action plan
  - c. Title report "Toward a Hunger Free Illinois"
- VI. Next Steps - Kate Maehr, Co-Chair
- a. Action Plan
    - i. Currently working to cultivate additional financial partners. Need to identify new funding that is not taking it away from existing groups
  - b. Feeding Illinois Conference, March 21 and 22, Springfield
    - i. Action plan being releases at the conference
    - ii. Traditionally a meeting of food bank people
    - iii. This is a chance to engage IL legislators
    - iv. Have toolkits and resources available
    - v. Opportunity to break out into regional working groups
    - vi. Invite list is being expanded to include more people into this conversation.
    - vii. Would recommend including recipients of services to conference
  - c. May 7 Southern Illinois business community funding opportunity
  - d. Allison is moving to Share Our Strength Cooking Matters
- VII. Closing - Kate Maehr and Cristal Thomas, Co-Chairs
- a. The Commission is responsible for reporting to the Governor and to continue working on hunger issues
  - b. Keep up communication but included details in attachments
  - c. June 26, 2012, 9am Commission meeting

- i. Purpose will be to check in on action plans
  - ii. Check in on breakfast programs
  - iii. Summer program will have begun and a sense of participation
- d. Need to make sure messaging is not just about band aids to the existing problems so it is important to bring many to the table to create long term solutions to poverty. Hunger needs to be a part of this work.
- e. Need to keep the Commission work integrating into other projects
- f. Mark asked where the accountability and responsibility comes from in this process. This will come from the development of the action plan, the what, when and who is responsible.
- g. Need to work on framing this issue in a way that gets people involved. The messaging needs to be very clear.